In this chapter, the writer explains learning English, anxiety, foreign language anxiety, types of foreign language anxiety, factors that trigger foreign language anxiety, and ways to lessen foreign language anxiety.

2.1 Learning English

English has increasingly become the medium in every domain of communication, both in local and global contexts. As a result, there is a demand for speakers who can use English effectively in every country. English is called the international language and is also the second language of many countries in the world. In Indonesia, English is considered a foreign language, for it is a language studied in an environment where it is not the primary means for daily interaction, and the use of the language is restricted. Even though English is said to be difficult to learn and to use, it keeps attracting people to learn it (Dian, Fajrina, and Hanifa, 2015).

Furthermore, Patel and Jain (2008) as cited in Dian et al (2015), stated that communication, self-expression, and thinking are the primary functions of language. Hence, it is obvious that language is a means of communication. For a learner to master a language well, she/he must be able to speak that language. Nunan (1991) also said that among the four key language skills, speaking is deemed to be the most important skill that must be mastered well in learning a new language. For most people, mastering speaking skills is the single most
important aspect of learning a foreign language, and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry on a conversation in that language (as cited in Dian, Fajrina, and Hanifa, 2015).

2.2 Anxiety

According to Doubek, & Anders (2013), anxiety can be defined as a mental and physical state characterized by specific emotional, physical, cognitive and behavioral symptoms. It is an adaptive reaction which mobilizes the organism and helps it defends attachs or avoids an anxiety stimulus. The stimulus can be a previous external or internal antecedent or trigger. To state the definite causes of anxiety can be rather complicated as it is influenced by many factors – biological, psychological, social or other (as cited in Kráľová, 2015).

Furthermore, anxiety refers to a psychological state in which the person’s sense of uneasy suspense and worry is triggered by uncertain circumstances. That is, anxiety refers to general feelings of uneasiness and distress about an unspecified, diffuse, uncertain, and often formless form of threat or danger. The person is uncertain how to act; because the nature and place of the threat are obscure (Zeidner and Matthews, 2010).

In addition, Szirmai (2011) stated that Anxiety is characterized by a diffuse, unpleasant, vague sensation of fear or anguish accompanied by autonomic symptoms such as head ache, sweating, palpitations, tachycardia, gastric discomfort, etc. Therefore it includes physiological and psychological components, anxious individuals being usually aware of both. Anxiety may affect thinking, perception and learning; it can generate distortion of perception,
impairment in concentration, recall and associations. Another important aspect is the effect it may have on selective attention, anxious individuals select certain things or events around them and exaggerate the importance of others, in an attempt to justify their anxiety as reaction to a fearful situation.

2.3 Foreign Language Anxiety

Anxiety plays a significant role in language learning and communication, and it is a real challenge in foreign language teaching and learning. English language anxiety has long been the major discussion issue for the language researchers such as Krashen, Horwitz, Oxford, etc. in the aspect of language teaching. This is because English learning is a complicated process. Anxiety is one affective variable that can limit input from being processed by the brain, and its presence may give some explanation as to why second language acquisition is unsuccessful for some learners. Therefore, in order to promote successful language acquisition, it is important for teachers to develop a low anxiety environment for students (Gustafson, 2015).

Foreign language anxiety is a specific anxiety which is related to language learning. According to Brown (1991), foreign language anxiety is a feeling of intimidation and inadequacy over the prospect of learning a foreign language. In addition, according to Gardner and MacIntyre (1993), as cited in Oxford (1999), stated that it is fear or apprehension occurring when a learner is expected to perform in the target language".

The language classroom during foreign language learning process naturally presents itself as an anxiety-provoking situation to some learners, as it
often involves constant evaluations from others as well as from the learner him/herself. In such an environment, chances of being evaluated might serve as a reminder of the learner's current L2 competence in comparison to others' or idealized images of him/herself as a successful language learner (Eharman, 1996 as cited in Ohata, 2005).

2.3.1 Types of Foreign Language Anxiety

Zeidner and Matthews (2010) stated that there are two kinds of anxiety. They are trait anxiety and state anxiety:

2.3.1.1 Trait anxiety

Trait anxiety refers to being anxiety-prone, that is, a stable personality characteristic. Some individuals are more easily made anxious than others and are said to be high in trait anxiety. Trait anxiety is distinguished from state anxiety, which refers to the immediate feelings of being anxious, such as nervousness and bodily tension (Zeidner and Matthews, 2010).

2.3.1.2 State anxiety

The person’s experience of state anxiety depends on either his or her underlying personality—his or her stable vulnerability to anxiety—and the presence of situational stressors or threats. An external threat, like being criticized in front of a group of people, will raise state anxiety in most people (Zeidner and Matthews, 2010).

However, the level of state anxiety will depend on level of trait anxiety. The highly trait-anxious person will probably experience intense state anxiety, whereas the more resilient individual, who is low in state anxiety, may only
experience a moderate amount of tension. Thus, state anxiety reflects an interaction between trait anxiety and situational threat (Zeidner and Matthews, 2010).

2.4 Factors that Trigger Foreign Language Anxiety

There are several main factors that trigger foreign language anxiety. Young (1991) classified sources of language anxiety into six categories: personal and interpersonal, learner beliefs, instructor beliefs, instructor-learner interactions, classroom procedures, and language testing.

2.4.1 Personal and interpersonal

Personal and interpersonal issues are probably the most commonly cited and discussed sources of language anxiety in most studies. Low self-esteem and competitiveness are the two significant sources of learner anxiety under this rubric. Competitiveness can lead to anxiety when language learners compare themselves to others or to an idealized self-image (Young, 1991).

2.4.2 Learner beliefs

Learner beliefs about language learning are a major contributor to language anxiety. Varieties of practices learners believe are important for successful language learning. This learners’ belief, for instance, that pronunciation is the most important practice in language learning. For example, most beginning students, unless they are highly motivated, will not sound like a native speaker. If they believe that pronunciation is the most important aspect of a language, they will end up frustrated and stressed. The same frustration and anxiety sets
in if they believe they should be fluent in two years. In other words, anxiety occurs when beliefs and reality clash to students’ thought (Young, 1991).

2.4.3 Instructor beliefs

Instructor beliefs about language teaching are a further source of language anxiety. An instructor who believes their role is to correct students constantly when they make any error, who feel that they cannot have students working in pairs because the class may get out of control, who believe that the teacher should be doing most of the talking and teaching, and who think their role is more like a drill sergeants than a facilitator may be contributing to learner language anxiety. The social context that the instructor sets up in the classroom can have tremendous ramifications for the learners (Young, 1991).

2.4.4 Instructor-learner interactions

Learners consistently report anxiety over responding incorrectly, being incorrect in front of their peers, and looking or sounding "dumb." They also express concerns over how mistakes are perceived in the language classroom. The issue for the student, then, is not necessarily error correction but the manner of error correction - when, how often, and, most importantly, how errors are corrected.

2.4.5 Classroom procedures

Anxieties associated with classroom procedures center primarily on having to speak in the target language in front of a group. For example, students reported oral presentations in front of the class, oral quizzes and being called on to respond orally in the target language as the most anxiety-producing activities in their
natural approach classes (Young, 1991). She also found that more than sixty-eight percent of her subjects reported feeling more comfortable when they did not have to get in front of the class to speak.

### 2.4.6 Language testing

Language testing can also produce anxiety, especially when test items are unfamiliar, ambiguous, or involve speaking or listening (Daly, 1991). Even students who do not generally experience anxiety in speaking the second language may do so in evaluative situations. Language testing, therefore, is not surprising as a source of anxiety, given that test anxiety is a form of anxiety in itself, and in language learning situations it is combined with language anxiety (Young, 1991).

### 2.5 Ways to Lessen Foreign Language Anxiety

According to Zeidner and Matthews (2011), there are three ways to lessen anxiety, which is problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping and avoidance-oriented coping.

#### 2.5.1 Problem-focused coping

Problem-focused coping is designed to manage or solve the problem by removing or mitigating the anxiety-evoking situation (e.g., preparing a complex PowerPoint presentation in classroom). Because problem-focused coping would be expected to alter the actual terms of the individual’s stressful relationship with the environment, this should lead, in turn, to more favorable cognitive appraisals and a more positive response to the ego-threatening situation.
However, problem-oriented coping can also have adverse effects, including elevated situational anxiety, in that dealing with the stressor can arouse thoughts about the impending threat. Over the long run, however, the beneficial effects of problem-focused behaviors, such as improving one’s competencies to deal with the stressful circumstances, are believed to outweigh any negative situational effects.

2.5.2 Emotion-focused coping

Emotion-focused coping is designed to regulate, reduce, or eliminate the anxiety symptoms and negative effects associated with the anxiety-evoking situation (e.g., use of relaxation techniques, seeking emotional support from friends, denying the importance of an impending public speech). Sometimes, emotion-focused coping involves the reduction of emotional tension by simply accepting anxiety and the possibility of failure.

Emotion-focused techniques also involve induction of positive anxiety-incompatible emotions, such as using humor, listening to relaxing music, or cognitively reappraising the threatening situation as being more controllable or less subjectively important. Many of these strategies may in fact be effective in reducing negative emotions.

2.5.3 Avoidance-oriented coping

Avoidance-oriented coping refers to the use of either person-oriented strategies (e.g., avoidance or seeking of others) or task-oriented strategies, designed to mentally or behaviorally avoid or escape an anxiety-evoking situation.
Examples of such strategies include effort withdrawal, physical escape, denial, procrastination, and focusing attention on task-irrelevant issues.

Furthermore, although avoidance strategies can lead to a reduction in immediate state anxiety, the long-term effects of avoidance can also be severe. Firstly, consciously avoiding the experience of anxiety can lead to a detrimental increase of less conscious emotional arousal on a physiological level. Secondly, although these strategies may temporarily reduce anxiety, the underlying factors contributing to the experience of anxiety (e.g., low perceived control) remain untreated.